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By far the most interesting portion of Mr. Oliphant's book is that which refers to Japan. His descriptions of the country and the peculiar manners and customs of the people, their extraordinary civilization, and their strange form of government, read like a romance, the object of the author being to fascinate and delude his readers with a tale of some fairy land. Now that the Japanese Embassy is approaching our shores, this book arrives in good time, and will supply the demand which our anxiety to know more of these curious people must create.

**LETTERS FROM SWITZERLAND.** By Samuel Irenæus Prime, D.D. Sheldon & Company, N. Y.

We cannot conscientiously say that Mr. Prime is a keen observer or an interesting writer. Mr. Prime is always before us. He is busy telling us of himself, what hotel he dined at, who was with him, what the landlord said to him, and how Mr. Prime intends to proceed. Out of such good materials as Mr. Prime had spread before him, it is remarkable that he should have produced so excessively dull and commonplace a book. We wish he had given us more of Switzerland and less of himself.

**TYLNEY HALL.** By Thomas Hood. J. E. Tilton & Company, Boston.

We have just received a copy of this novel, elegantly printed and bound. The name of the author is a sufficient guaranty that its contents will well repay a perusal. We shall speak of it as it deserves in our next number. It is a proof of good taste in the publishers to again bring this novel, so refreshing of wit and humor, before the public.

**WALTER ASHWOOD; A LOVE STORY.** By Paul Sivgvolk. Rudd & Carleton, New York.

About as weak an attempt at novel-writing as we have chanced upon for a long time. The hero is clever at heart-breaking, but in attempting to make his flirtations interesting to the readers the writer has made a lamentable failure. The book is got up in good style, and we confess to a feeling of sympathy at seeing such good paper and printing wasted on what does not rise above the dignity of literary trash.

**THE LIFE OF JEREMY TAYLOR.** By George L. Duyckinck. Church Book Society, New York.

Mr. Duyckinck has performed his task with great good taste and judgment. A clear, reliable and comprehensive life of this good man was much needed, and Mr. Duyckinck's work will be hailed with pleasure at the fireside of every family where the name of Jeremy Taylor is familiar. It should be a welcome guest at the fireside of every truly religious family. The publishers deserve credit for the neatness of style in which the work is produced.

**A KNOWLEDGE OF LIVING THINGS, with the Laws of their Existence.** By A. N. Bell. Baillière Brothers, New York.

Some idea of living objects, more comprehensive than of old, is an indispensable requirement now-a-days. Existences seem to be scarcely heeded as mere facts; we must know something of their origin, growth and place in this universe, in order to keep pace not only with the minds of school-children, but with the new order of literature which the best thinkers of the day are gradually forming. This little work treats of the phenomena of life; in other words, of the physiology of organic and inorganic bodies, from an atom of matter up to the complex organism of man. It is a lucid digest of established facts con-

cerning the mineral, vegetable and animal worlds, its style and plan being well adapted to the grasp of an ordinarily well-informed person. The illustrations are numerous and well executed, and are drawn from the best authorities, and the typography is in harmony with these, and in keeping with the usual good taste of the enterprising publishers.

**THE HISTORY OF SOUTH CAROLINA.** By William Gilmore Simms. Redfield.

The name of the author is ample guaranty for the excellence of this work. The historical picture presented in it is clearly drawn and well composed. The dramatic skill which Mr. Simms possesses, gives the narrative more interest than we commonly find in such productions.

**THE SECRET OUT; or, One Thousand Tricks with Cards.** Dick & Fitzgerald.

This is an interesting volume for such persons as have a taste for the mysteries of cards and regard them as a source of innocent amusement. The book is not designed for professional use, but for the fireside; and our friends in the country will find it an amusing companion of a winter evening. It discovers the manner in which more than one thousand tricks are performed, each trick being accompanied with a drawing. Armed with such a book, every man can be his own juggler.

**HOME PASTIMES; or, Tableaux Vivants.** J. E. Tilton & Co., Boston.

This book is intended to supply a want often felt by people who cater for other people's amusement. It suggests a species of entertainment, and sets forth the *modus operandi*; its title, "Tableaux Vivants," explains its purpose. Numerous subjects for tableaux are given in this work, with directions how to arrange figures and costumes effectively, and how to produce colored lights, mimic thunder, flesh stains, scenery, all the paraphernalia of theatrical display. The descriptions of the subjects are well written, and the book is printed in a superior manner.

**THE BULWER NOVELS.**—Messrs. J. B. Lippincott & Co., of Philadelphia, are publishing Bulwer's novels in 12mo. form, exquisitely bound and printed. An edition of this kind was much wanted, and we are glad to see the enterprise in the hands of so responsible a house.

**MASON BROTHERS** have in press and will shortly publish a book of travels in Arabia, entitled—"The Wonders of the Desert," by Dr. Couret, the celebrated French traveller, and translated by Mr. C. D. Shanley, well known as a contributor to the "Atlantic Monthly."

Several of our keen-eyed publishers are on the watch for Presidential candidates whose lives they can turn a penny by publishing. This Presidential literature is a great nuisance. He who reads such books expecting to get the truth will be sadly disappointed.

**THE LONDON CRITIC** says the American publishers are now in favor of an International Copyright. This is a grave mistake. American publishers have no idea of atoning for past sins, by any repentant unselfish thought of this kind.

Notices of "Napoleon III. and Italy," by Mrs. Browning; "Lyrics and Idyls," by E. C. Stedman, and of "Lectures on the English Language," by Hon. G. P. Marsh, will appear in the number for June.